

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2003

Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

We are writing to request that the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee continue to provide crucial support for two vital autism research initiatives. While we have made much progress in funding over the past few years, more needs to be done to help us become closer to learning what causes this dreadful communications disorder research estimates say impacts as many as one in 250 Americans.

Specifically, we are requesting that the committee help continue to expand autism surveillance projects at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by appropriating \$17 million in Fiscal Year 2004 – \$7 million more than the \$10 million appropriated in FY 03. We are also requesting that you work to increase funds for autism research initiatives at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to \$120 million in FY 04 to help us reach a medium-term goal of \$250 million a year in the very near future. While this represents a sizable increase from the estimated \$81 million invested during FY 03, we firmly believe this commitment must be made if we are to understand what causes autism and find a cure.

So far, funding from Congress has enabled CDC to gather epidemiological data in 13 states throughout the country. These centers are working to gather data on new autism cases in the effort to identify the prevalence rate of autism, verify that these cases are accurately diagnosed, and establish any environmental, medical, or other factors that correlate with incidence. But in order to obtain an adequate picture of the national autism epidemic, CDC has said they need data from a minimum of 20 states. By providing an additional \$7 million, CDC would be able to establish an additional eight epidemiological research centers and thus be able to collect the full amount of data it needs to complete this project.

In addition to the funding, we would like to insert report language into the bill that urges CDC to dedicate the resources necessary to quickly process the data collected through the surveillance project. And, we would also like language requesting that the data collected from the existing centers be reported preliminarily in the hopes that such information could guide the remainder of the work on this critical project.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2003

Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

We are writing to request that the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee continue to provide crucial support for two vital autism research initiatives. While we have made much progress in funding over the past few years, more needs to be done to help us become closer to learning what causes this dreadful communications disorder research estimates say impacts as many as one in 250 Americans.

Specifically, we are requesting that the committee help continue to expand autism surveillance projects at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by appropriating \$17 million in Fiscal Year 2004 – \$7 million more than the \$10 million appropriated in FY 03. We are also requesting that you work to increase funds for autism research initiatives at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to \$120 million in FY 04 to help us reach a medium-term goal of \$250 million a year in the very near future. While this represents a sizable increase from the estimated \$81 million invested during FY 03, we firmly believe this commitment must be made if we are to understand what causes autism and find a cure.

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In addition to the funding, we would like to insert report language into the bill that urges CDC to dedicate the resources necessary to quickly process the data collected through the surveillance project. And, we would also like language requesting that the data collected from the existing centers be reported preliminarily in the hopes that such information could guide the remainder of the work on this critical project.

Equally important is NIH research. We are asking that Congress make a clear statement as to the importance of this research by working to meet the spirit and letter of the autism provisions included in the Children's Health Act (PL 106-310) by authorizing an expansion of autism research at NIH to \$120 million in FY 04 so that we can meet the mid-term goal of \$250 million. Autism affects an estimated 1.5 million Americans and costs the economy about \$90 billion a year. In 10 years, it has been estimated that this disorder will cost our nation a staggering \$400 billion a year. These alarming numbers are clear evidence that autism is a major health *and* economic problem. If we do not provide sufficient funds to support autism research today, we will be paying much higher costs to take care of autism patients tomorrow.

Thank you for taking the time to review this important appropriation request. We look forward to continuing to work with the committee as we continue to advance research into unlocking autism. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Nick Manetto with Rep. Smith at 5-3765 or James Sharp with Rep. Doyle at 5-2135.

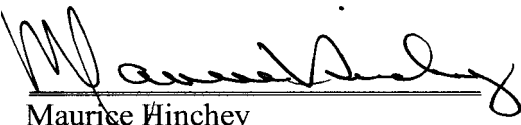
Sincerely,



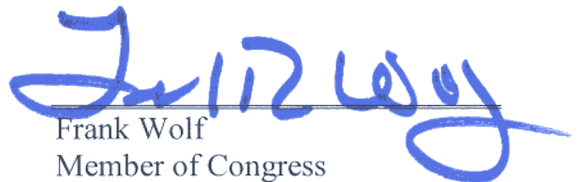
Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



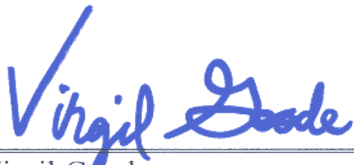
Mike Doyle
Member of Congress



Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress



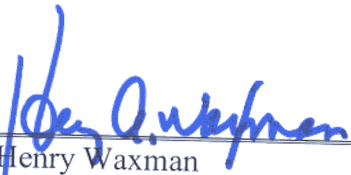
Frank Wolf
Member of Congress



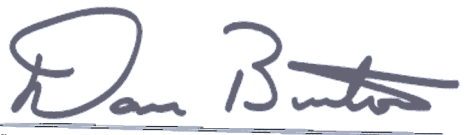
Virgil Goode
Member of Congress



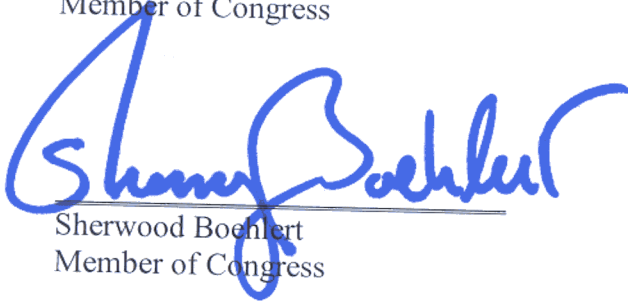
Robert Cramer
Member of Congress



Henry Waxman
Member of Congress



Dan Burton
Member of Congress



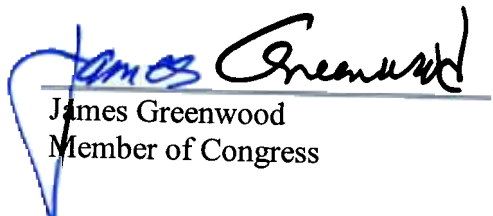
Sherwood Boehlert
Member of Congress



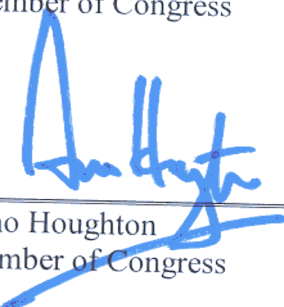
Frank Pallone
Member of Congress



Martin Frost
Member of Congress



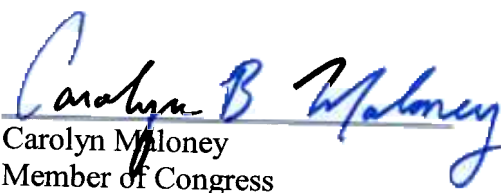
James Greenwood
Member of Congress



Amo Houghton
Member of Congress



Barney Frank
Member of Congress



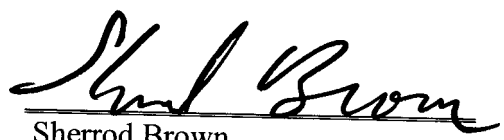
Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress



William Jenkins
Member of Congress



Peter King
Member of Congress



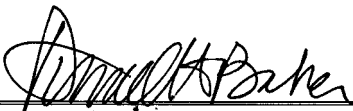
Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress



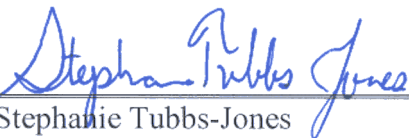
Phil English
Member of Congress



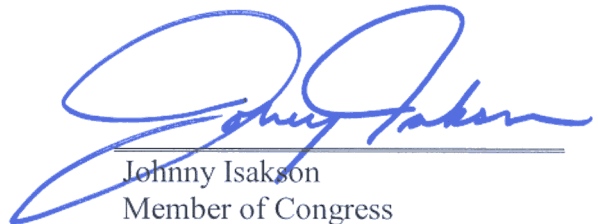
Richard Baker
Member of Congress



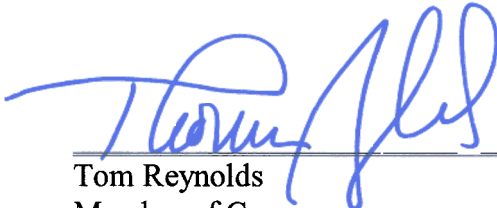
Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress



Stephanie Tubbs-Jones
Member of Congress



Johnny Isakson
Member of Congress



Tom Reynolds
Member of Congress



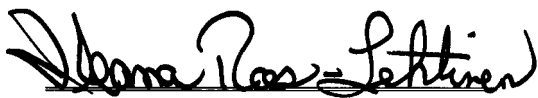
Michael McNulty
Member of Congress



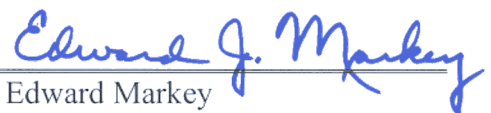
Max Sandlin
Member of Congress



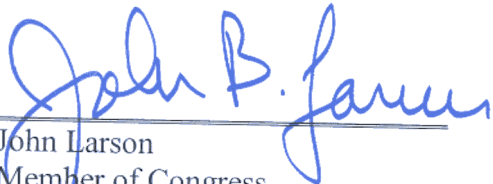
Mark Green
Member of Congress



Ilena Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress




Edward Markey
Member of Congress




John Larson
Member of Congress



Candice Miller
Member of Congress




John Davis
Member of Congress




Tim Holden
Member of Congress




Bob Filner
Member of Congress




Eric Cantor
Member of Congress




Todd Platts
Member of Congress




Nick Rahall
Member of Congress




Jerry Costello
Member of Congress




Charles Pickering
Member of Congress




Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



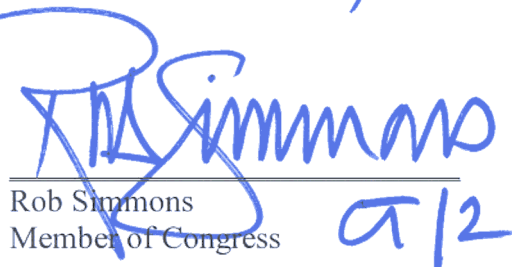
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Member of Congress



Robert Brady
Member of Congress



Tom Davis
Member of Congress



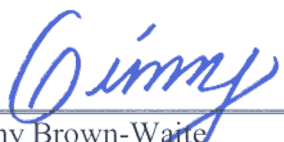
Rob Simmons
Member of Congress



Joseph Hoeffel
Member of Congress




Donald Payne
Member of Congress



Ginny Brown-Waite
Member of Congress



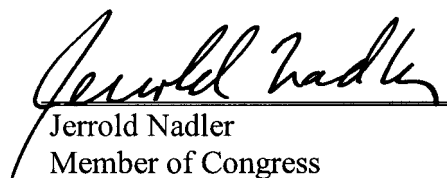
Melissa Hart
Member of Congress



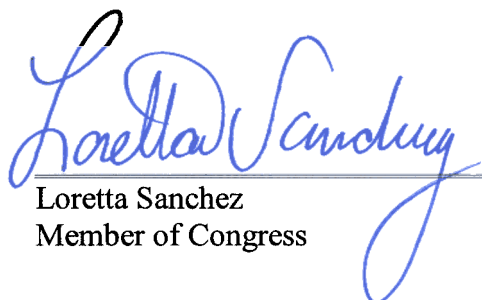
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Ted Strickland
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



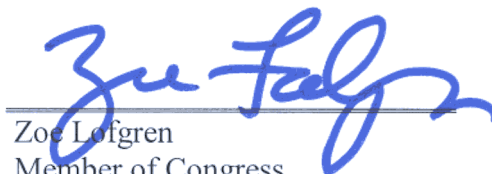
Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



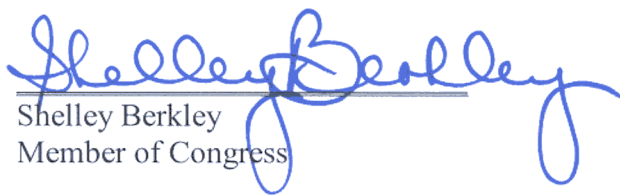
Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



Dale Kildee
Member of Congress



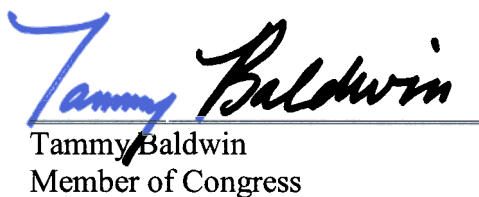
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



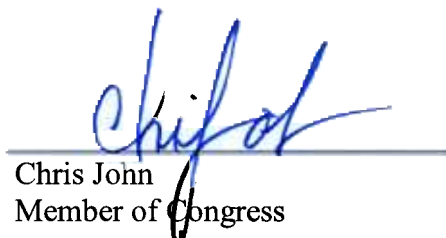
Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



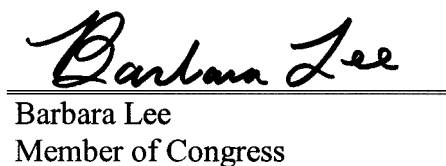
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



Chris John
Member of Congress



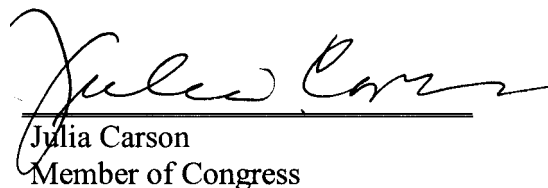
Bart Stupak
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



James McGovern
Member of Congress



Julia Carson
Member of Congress



Rush Holt
Member of Congress



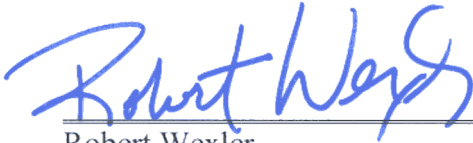
Robert Andrews
Member of Congress



Anthony Weiner
Member of Congress



Bernie Sanders
Member of Congress



Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



Timothy Bishop
Member of Congress



Tom Allen
Member of Congress



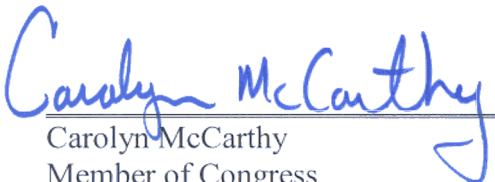
Steve Israel
Member of Congress



Gene Taylor
Member of Congress



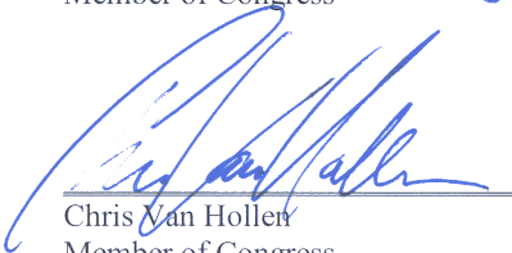
Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress



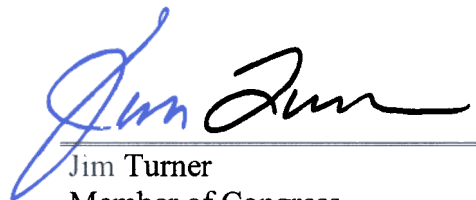
Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress



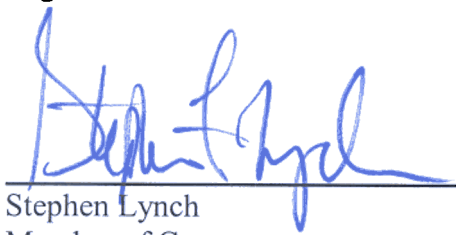
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



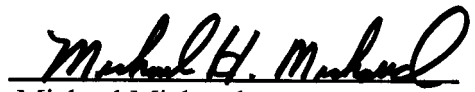
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress




Jim Turner
Member of Congress




Stephen Lynch
Member of Congress



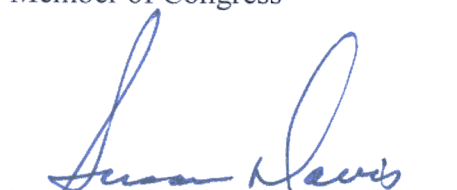
Michael Michaud
Member of Congress




Vic Snyder
Member of Congress



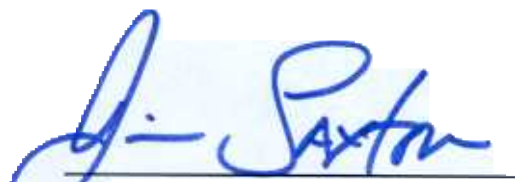
Donna Christensen
Member of Congress



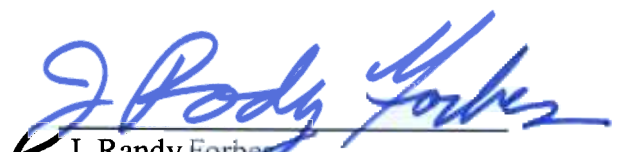
Susan Davis
Member of Congress




John Spratt
Member of Congress



Jim Saxton
Member of Congress



J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress



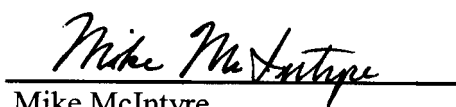
James Langevin
Member of Congress



Fortney "Pete" Stark
Member of Congress



Thaddeus McCotter
Member of Congress



Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ed Pastor", written in dark ink on a light blue rectangular background.

Pastor
Member Congress

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Delahunt", written in dark ink on a light blue rectangular background.

William Delahunt
Member of Congress